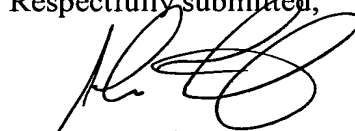


REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Preliminary Amendment, the specification is amended. Prompt and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

John W. Fitzpatrick
Registration No. 41,018

JAO:JWF/ldg

Date: January 20, 2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--